Claims 1-30 are pending. Claims 1-30 were rejected by the Examiner. The specification was objected to for informalities that are corrected by this amendment. Claims 16 and 22 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1-30 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Erami et al. (US 2003/0189920) in view of McCormick et al. (US 2002/0083260).

Claims 1, 9, 16, 22, and 25 are amended. No new subject matter is added. Claims 1-30 remain in the case for consideration. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-30 are requested in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

In the Specification

The specification was objected to by the Examiner. The specification is amended to reflect the following changes:

On page 4, line 5, replace "~~10/xxx,xxx, (attorney docket no. 5038-335)~~" with – 10/713,237–.

On page 6, line 23, add –An example of the software mechanism is the distributed control plane architecture (DCPA) discussed in copending US Patent Application Serial No. 10/713,237– after "The offloaded portion of the link management registers with the software mechanism that provides transparent communication and control of the distribution at 62."

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected claims 16 and 22, alleging that one cannot determine the meaning of "a central registration point" recited in claims 16 and 22, in light of the specification.

Without conceding the merits of this rejection, the applicant removed the feature "a central registration point" from claims 16 and 22 and amended claims 16 and 22 to recite "registering…with a software mechanism." As mentioned in the specification, an example of the software mechanism is the distributed control plane architecture (DCPA) discussed in copending US Patent Application Serial No. 10/713,237, filed November 13, 2003. This is just one example of such a mechanism, but may promote ease of understanding of the claimed subject matter. *See* Specification, page 4, lines 1-7, page 6, lines 22-23, and page 7, line 15.

Applicant submits that there is more than ample description in the specification to enable one skilled in the art. As such, removal of the rejection is thus respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C.103

Claims 1-30 were rejected as being unpatentable over Erami in view of McCormick. The applicant traverses the rejection for the following reasons.

Claim 1 recites "a control processor to execute a control portion of link management; and a line processor to execute an offload portion of link management." Claims 9, 16, 22, and 25 recite similar features.

The Examiner alleges that Erami teaches the feature of a control processor and a line processor as recited in claim 1. But Erami does not teach a control processor and a line processor respectively implementing a control portion and an offload portion of link management recited in claims 1, 9, 16, 22, and 25. Erami teaches discovering the location of a failure of a data channel during a control channel failure in a transmission network system. Specifically, Erami discloses a first transmission device having a first failure detecting unit for detecting a failure of a working control channel; a second failure detecting unit for detecting a failure of a working data channel; a route searching unit for searching a route of a protection

control channel; and a transmission unit for transmitting failure information detected by the second failure detecting unit to a second transmission device located at the upstream side via the protection control channel. And by this failure notification, the failure location can be discovered by the second transmission device located at the upstream side. *See* Erami, Col. 2, paragraph [0020], [0022], and abstract. Nowhere does Erami teach a control processor and a line processor respectively implementing a control portion and an offload portion of link management as recited in the claims 1, 9, 16, 22, and 25. In fact, the Examiner has explicitly acknowledged that Erami does not show a control processor and a line processor. *See* Office Action, page 3, paragraph 5. Erami cannot teach the feature of a control processor and a line processor as claimed.

McCormick, on the other hand, discloses a multiprocessor control block, which includes a resource and routing processor 220, a plurality of intermediate processors 230-234, and a link layer processor 240. *See* McCormick, page 2, paragraph [0019], and FIG. 3. Specifically, the resource and routing processor 220 performs functions associated with resource distribution and routing of calls; the intermediate processors 230-234, each of which performs similar processing operations such as those included in the signaling link layer of the protocol stack of FIG. 4 as well as call processing operations; and the link layer processor 240 performs data forwarding between the switch fabric and the intermediate processors associated with the physical link layer. *See* McCormick, abstract, page 3, paragraph [0025], [0027], and FIG. 4.

Although McCormick defines the signaling link layer portion 295 of the protocol stack 290 to include functionality such as verification that the various links required by the system are up (*See* McCormick Page 2, paragraph [22]), McCormick does not specifically disclose a control portion and an off-load portion of link management, and the use of two processors, a control

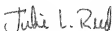processor and a line processor, to execute the control portion and the off-load portion respectively.

McCormick does not cure the deficiencies in Erami. Claims 1, 9, 16, 22, and 25 are therefore patentably distinguishable from Erami and McCormick, as are their dependent claims. Claims 1-30 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

No new matter has been added by this amendment. Allowance of all claims is requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (503) 222-3613 if it appears that an interview would be helpful in advancing the case.

Customer No. 32231

Respectfully submitted,

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